



Milwaukee County

Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., 7th District

Chairman, Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee

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COUNTY BOARD TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE APPROVES ADVISORY REFERENDUM ON PROPERTY TAX REDUCTION

Tax shift would shore up funding for mass transit in Milwaukee County

Milwaukee, WI – The Milwaukee County Board’s Transportation, Public Works and Transit Committee voted 4-3 Wednesday to approve a resolution calling for an advisory referendum on whether to provide property tax relief by shifting transit funding from property taxes to a sales tax.

“We urgently need to identify a dedicated funding source for the local portion of mass transit funding in Milwaukee County,” said Supervisor Michael Mayo, Sr., Chairman of the Committee. “By removing the transit funding burden from local property tax payers and shifting the cost to a small increase in the sales and use tax, we can shore up transit funding in a more fair manner.” **About a third of sales tax revenues come from visitors who do not live in Milwaukee County**, but take advantage of the County’s many attractions.

The referendum question, if approved, would appear on the November 4, 2008 ballot. The yes or no question would read, “Shall the State of Wisconsin grant Milwaukee County the authority to levy an additional one half (.50) of one percent county use and sales tax, the revenues of which will be used to reduce all property tax revenues currently used to fund the County’s transit system?”

“**This property tax reduction**, combined with shifting Parks funding from the property tax to a sales tax, would take our property tax levy down to levels we haven’t seen 1999,” said Chairman Lee Holloway. “This goes beyond a tax freeze to provide **true property tax relief** for Milwaukee County residents. For the owner of a \$150,000 home in Milwaukee, this would be about a \$152 property tax reduction.”

The lack of a dedicated funding source for transit was identified as an urgent concern in a report issued by the Public Policy Forum last month. The full County Board will consider the resolution at its next meeting on June 26, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 200 of the Milwaukee County Courthouse.